

REMARKS

Claims 8-11 are pending the present application, with Claim 8 being the sole independent claim. Claims 10 and 11 are newly added.

In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, favorable reconsideration and allowance of the above application is respectfully sought.

Applicants' invention as now set forth an independent claim 8 is directed to the original document processing apparatus which comprises a conveying roller which conveys an original document to an original document reading position, a pair of reverse-discharge rollers capable of rotating forward and reverse which feeds the original document to the conveying roller by switchback, and discharging the original document conveyed from the conveying roller and an electricity removal needle which removes electricity from the conveyed sheet. The invention is characterized in that the switchback serves to feed an original document from the pair of reverse-discharge rollers to the conveying roller, the pair of reverse-discharge rollers separate from each other to stop rotation after the original document is fed to the conveying roller by the switchback and the electricity removal needle is disposed at a downstream side in an original document discharging direction from a crossover position for a front edge of the original document and a rear edge of the original document in the case of conveying the original document having a maximum conveyable length by switchback, and in a downstream side in the original document discharging direction of the pair of reverse-discharge rollers.

Claim 8 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kobayashi, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,826,155) in view of Greco, Jr. (U.S. Patent No. 5,022,640). Claims 8 and 9 are also rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 13 and 14 of U.S. Patent No. 6,674,991. In view of the above amendments and for reasons which follow, the rejections are respectfully traversed.

Turning first to the rejection for obviousness-type double patenting, the Examiner will appreciate that the amendments to independent claim 8 present features not contained in either claim 13 or 14 of the '991 patent. More specifically, claim 8 now directly recites that the pair of reverse-discharge rollers separate from each other to stop rotation after the original document is fed to the conveying roller by the switchback. Those features are neither taught nor suggested by claims 13 or 14 of the '991 patent. It is therefore respectfully submitted that the rejection for obviousness-type double patenting has been addressed and overcome.

Kobayashi is directed to a document feeder with a document tray for placing documents thereon, separating and supplying means for separating, sheet by sheet, and supplying the documents stacked on the document tray, first register means including a pair of rollers disposed in the main path for guiding the document, a rotation roller as transferring means for rotating the supplied document and so that information is read by the fixed moving illumination device, a switchback mechanism, which is also used as paper ejecting means, for carrying out a paper ejecting operation to eject the read document and switchback in a document in the middle of the paper ejecting operation to thereby

again supply the document to the rotation roller, and an ejection tray 80 for receiving processed documents. Thus, Kobayashi does feature an original document conveying apparatus switchback in the document one face of which has been read in the middle of the paper ejecting operation to thereby again supply the document to the reading position. However, Kobayashi does not disclose or suggest an electricity removal needle and clearly not one as recited in claim 8.

Greco, Jr. relates to a sheet conveying module for duplex copying a sheet by conveying the sheet from the feeder module to photoconductive surface and then reversing the sheet to pass it to the feeder module and again conveying the sheet from the feeder module to the photoconductive surface. In that reference, a static eliminator 43 is disposed in the feeder module. However, the static eliminator is disposed at a downstream side of an input feed roller to enhance feeding sheets out of the module.

Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of Kobayashi and Greco would not have rendered the invention as recited in independent claim 8 obvious. Claim 8 specifically requires the electricity removal needle to be disposed at a downstream side in an original document discharging direction from a cross over position for a front edge of original document and a rear edge of the original document in a case of conveying the original document having a maximum conveyable length by switchback, and at a downstream side in the original document discharging direction of the pair of discharge rollers. There is nothing to teach or suggest in the combination of the applied art of removing electricity of the original document which is discharged when the front face or rear face of the document crosses over. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that

even in combination, the applied art does not teach or suggest the invention as recited in claim 8.

Claims 9-11 depend from claim 8 and are therefore patentable over the art of record for reasons noted above with respect to claim 8. In addition, each recite features of the invention still further distinguishing it from the applied art. Favorable and independent consideration thereof is respectfully sought.

Applicants respectfully submit that all outstanding matters in the above application have been addressed and that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the above application are respectfully sought.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



Lawrence A. Stahl
Attorney for Applicants
Registration No. 30,110

FITZPATRICK, CELLA, HARPER & SCINTO
30 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, New York 10112-3801
Facsimile: (212) 218-2200
LAS:eyw:llp
DC-MAIN 178143 v1